

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An advertisement opportunity trading system enables communication between a terminal of a sponsor of an advertisement and a terminal of media which distributes an advertisement via a communication network, in order to intermediate between the sponsor and the media for facilitating a trade for an advertisement opportunity offered by the media, said system comprising:

an advertisement data reception unit which receives advertisement data from a sponsor who wants the advertisement data to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity;

an advertisement opportunity reception unit which receives an advertisement opportunity offered by media;

a distribution accepting unit which receives information from the media representing that distribution of the advertisement data is appropriate/inappropriate when the sponsor selects the advertisement opportunity received by said advertisement opportunity reception unit for distributing the advertisement data received by said advertisement data reception unit, for accepting an application for distribution of the advertisement data from the sponsor only after it is determined that the information from the media represents that distribution is appropriate based solely on the detailed content of the advertisement data per se; and

a trade process unit which performs a process for trading the advertisement opportunity based on the application accepted by said distribution accepting unit.

2. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 1, wherein in a case where said distribution accepting unit accepts applications for distribution of advertisement data from a plurality of sponsors for a same advertisement opportunity, said trade process unit puts up the advertisement opportunity for auction.

3. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 1, further comprising:

an advertisement data registration unit which registers the advertisement data received by said advertisement data reception unit;

an advertisement opportunity registration unit which registers the advertisement opportunity received by said advertisement opportunity reception unit; and

an advertisement opportunity publicizing unit which publicizes information on the advertisement opportunity registered in said advertisement opportunity registration unit via said communication network,

wherein said distribution accepting unit accepts an application for distribution of the advertisement data registered in said advertisement data registration unit from the sponsor.

4. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 3, wherein:

a plurality of advertisement data can be registered by a sponsor in said advertisement data registration unit for one advertisement opportunity; and

in a case where the media determines that the plurality of advertisement data of the sponsor are appropriate for distribution on the one advertisement opportunity, said distribution accepting unit accepts an application for distribution of one advertisement data designated by the sponsor from the plurality of advertisement data, as one to be actually distributed.

5. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 4, wherein said advertisement data reception unit changes the advertisement data designated by the sponsor as one to be actually distributed with another advertisement data among the plurality of advertisement data in accordance with an instruction from the sponsor.

6. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 1, wherein:

said advertisement data reception unit receives a genre of the advertisement data;

said advertisement opportunity reception unit receives a prohibited genre for designating a genre which will not be distributed on the advertisement opportunity; and

said system further comprises an advertisement data check unit which checks whether the genre of the advertisement data distribution of which on the advertisement opportunity the sponsor applies for corresponds to the prohibited genre or not, and notifies a result of checking to the media.

7. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 3, wherein:

said advertisement data registration unit registers a genre of the advertisement data;

said advertisement opportunity registration unit registers a prohibited genre for designating a genre which will not be distributed on the advertisement opportunity; and

said system further comprises an advertisement data check unit which checks whether the genre of the advertisement data distribution of which on the advertisement opportunity the sponsor applies for corresponds to the prohibited genre or not, and notifies a result of checking to the media.

8. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 1, further comprising a competition check unit which checks whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where said distribution accepting unit accepts applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors for one advertisement opportunity, wherein:

said competition check unit checks whether or not competition exists among the plurality of sponsors by a business category of the sponsor; and

said trade process unit permits an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors, in a case where competition among the plurality of sponsors is detected by checking of said competition check unit.

9. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 3, further comprising a competition check unit which checks whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where said distribution accepting unit accepts applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors for one advertisement opportunity, wherein:

said competition check unit checks whether or not competition exists among the plurality of sponsors by a business category of the sponsor; and

said trade process unit permits an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors, in a case where competition among the plurality of sponsors is detected by checking of said competition check unit.

10. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 1, further comprising an advertisement data mirroring unit which transmits advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to an advertisement distribution controller which performs distribution of advertisement data, wherein:

said advertisement data mirroring unit transmits the advertisement data to said advertisement distribution controller before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started by said trade process unit; and

said advertisement distribution controller stores the transmitted advertisement data, and performs distribution of the stored advertisement data which is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

11. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading system according to claim 3, further comprising an advertisement data mirroring unit which transmits advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to an advertisement distribution controller which performs distribution of advertisement data, wherein:

said advertisement data mirroring unit transmits the advertisement data to said advertisement distribution controller before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started by said trade process unit; and

said advertisement distribution controller stores the transmitted advertisement data, and performs distribution of the stored advertisement data which is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

12. (Currently Amended) A market control server which is a server apparatus which enables communication between a terminal of a sponsor of an advertisement and a

terminal of media which distributes an advertisement via a communication network, in order to intermediate between the sponsor and the media for facilitating a trade for an advertisement opportunity offered by the media, said server comprising:

an advertisement data reception unit which receives advertisement data from a sponsor who wants the advertisement data to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity;

an advertisement opportunity reception unit which receives an advertisement opportunity offered by media;

a distribution accepting unit which receives information from the media representing that distribution of the advertisement data is appropriate/inappropriate when the sponsor selects the advertisement opportunity received by said advertisement opportunity reception unit for distributing the advertisement data received by said advertisement data reception unit, for accepting an application for distribution of the advertisement data from the sponsor only after it is determined that the information from the media represents that distribution is appropriate based solely on the detailed content of the advertisement data per se; and

a trade process unit which performs a process for trading the advertisement opportunity based on the application accepted by said distribution accepting unit.

13. (Original) The market control server according to claim 12, wherein in a case where said distribution accepting unit accepts applications for distribution of advertisement data from a plurality of sponsors for a same advertisement opportunity, said trade process unit puts up the advertisement opportunity for auction.

14. (Original) The market control server according to claim 12, further comprising:

an advertisement data registration unit which registers the advertisement data received by said advertisement data reception unit;

an advertisement opportunity registration unit which registers the advertisement opportunity received by said advertisement opportunity reception unit; and

an advertisement opportunity publicizing unit which publicizes information on the advertisement opportunity registered in said advertisement opportunity registration unit via said communication network,

wherein said distribution accepting unit accepts an application for distribution of the advertisement data registered in said advertisement data registration unit from the sponsor.

15. (Original) The market control server according to claim 14, wherein:

a plurality of advertisement data can be registered by a sponsor in said advertisement data registration unit for one advertisement opportunity; and

in a case where the media determines that the plurality of advertisement data of the sponsor are appropriate for distribution on the one advertisement opportunity, said distribution accepting unit accepts an application for distribution of one advertisement data designated by the sponsor from the plurality of advertisement data, as one to be actually distributed.

16. (Original) The market control server according to claim 15, wherein said advertisement data reception unit changes the advertisement data designated by the sponsor as one to be actually distributed with another advertisement data among the plurality of advertisement data in accordance with an instruction from the sponsor.

17. (Original) The market control server according to claim 12, wherein:

said advertisement data reception unit receives a genre of the advertisement data;

said advertisement opportunity reception unit receives a prohibited genre for designating a genre which will not be distributed on the advertisement opportunity; and

said server further comprises an advertisement data check unit which checks whether the genre of the advertisement data distribution of which on the advertisement opportunity the sponsor applies for corresponds to the prohibited genre or not, and notifies a result of checking to the media.

18. (Original) The market control server according to claim 14, wherein:

said advertisement data registration unit registers a genre of the advertisement data;

said advertisement opportunity registration unit registers a prohibited genre for designating a genre which will not be distributed on the advertisement opportunity; and

said system further comprises an advertisement data check unit which checks whether the genre of the advertisement data distribution of which on the advertisement opportunity the sponsor applies for corresponds to the prohibited genre or not, and notifies a result of checking to the media.

19. (Original) The market control server according to claim 12, further comprising a competition check unit which checks whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where said distribution accepting unit accepts applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors for one advertisement opportunity, wherein:

said competition check unit checks whether or not competition exists among the plurality of sponsors by a business category of the sponsor; and

said trade process unit permits an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the

plurality of sponsors, in a case where competition among the plurality of sponsors is detected by checking of said competition check unit.

20. (Original) The market control server according to claim 14, further comprising a competition check unit which checks whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where said distribution accepting unit accepts applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors for one advertisement opportunity, wherein:

said competition check unit checks whether or not competition exists among the plurality of sponsors by a business category of the sponsor; and

said trade process unit permits an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors, in a case where competition among the plurality of sponsors is detected by checking of said competition check unit.

21. (Original) The market control server according to claim 12, further comprising an advertisement data mirroring unit which transmits advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to an advertisement distribution controller which performs distribution of advertisement data, wherein:

said advertisement data mirroring unit transmits the advertisement data to said advertisement distribution controller before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started by said trade process unit; and

said advertisement distribution controller stores the transmitted advertisement data, and performs distribution of the stored advertisement data which is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

22. (Original) The market control server according to claim 14, further comprising an advertisement data mirroring unit which transmits advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to an advertisement distribution controller which performs distribution of advertisement data, wherein:

said advertisement data mirroring unit transmits the advertisement data to said advertisement distribution controller before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started by said trade process unit; and

said advertisement distribution controller stores the transmitted advertisement data, and performs distribution of the store advertisement data which is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

23. (Currently Amended) An advertisement opportunity trading method which enables communication between a terminal of a sponsor of an advertisement and a terminal of media which distributes an advertisement via a communication network, in order to intermediate between the sponsor and the media for facilitating a trade for an advertisement opportunity offered by the media, said method comprising:

receiving advertisement data from a sponsor who wants the advertisement data to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity;

receiving an advertisement opportunity offered by media;

receiving information from the media representing that distribution of the advertisement data is appropriate/inappropriate when the sponsor selects the advertisement opportunity received in said receiving an advertisement opportunity for distributing the advertisement data received in said receiving advertisement data, and accepting an application for distribution of the advertisement data from the sponsor only after it is determined that the

information from the media represents that distribution is appropriate based solely on the detailed content of the advertisement data per se; and

performing a trading process for trading the advertisement opportunity based on the application accepted in said receiving information and accepting an application.

24. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading method according to claim 23, wherein in a case where applications for distribution of advertisement data from a plurality of sponsors are accepted in said receiving information and accepting an application for a same advertisement opportunity, the advertisement opportunity is put up for auction in said performing a trading process.

25. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading method according to claim 23, further comprising:

registering the advertisement data received in said receiving advertisement data;

registering the advertisement opportunity received in said receiving an advertisement opportunity; and

publicizing information on the advertisement opportunity registered in said registering the advertisement opportunity via said communication network,

wherein an application for distribution of the advertisement data registered in said registering the advertisement data is accepted from the sponsor in said receiving information and accepting an application.

26. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading method according to claim 25, wherein:

a plurality of advertisement data can be registered by a sponsor in said registering the advertisement data for one advertisement opportunity; and

in a case where the media determines that the plurality of advertisement data of the sponsor are appropriate for distribution on the one advertisement opportunity, an application for distribution of one advertisement data designated by the sponsor from the plurality of advertisement data is accepted as one to be actually distributed in said receiving information and accepting an application.

27. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading method according to claim 26, wherein the advertisement data designated by the sponsor as one to be actually distributed is changed with another advertisement data among the plurality of advertisement data in accordance with an instruction from the sponsor in said receiving advertisement data.

28. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading method according to claim 23, wherein:

a genre of the advertisement data is received in said receiving advertisement data;

a prohibited genre for designating a genre which will not be distributed on the advertisement opportunity is received in said receiving an advertisement opportunity; and

said method further comprises checking whether the genre of the advertisement data distribution of which on the advertisement opportunity the sponsor applies for corresponds to the prohibited genre or not, and notifying a result of checking to the media.

29. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading method according to claim 25, wherein:

a genre of the advertisement data is registered in said registering the advertisement data;

a prohibited genre for designating a genre which will not be distributed on the advertisement opportunity is registered in said registering the advertisement opportunity; and

said method further comprises checking whether the genre of the advertisement data distribution of which on the advertisement opportunity the sponsor applies for corresponds to the prohibited genre or not, and notifying a result of checking to the media.

30. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading method according to claim 23, further comprising checking whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors are accepted in said receiving information and accepting an application for one advertisement opportunity, wherein:

whether or not competition exists among the plurality of sponsors is checked by a business category of the sponsor in said checking; and

an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors is permitted in said performing a trading process, in a case where competition among the plurality of sponsors is detected in said checking.

31. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading method according to claim 25, further comprising checking whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors are accepted in said receiving information and accepting an application for one advertisement opportunity, wherein:

whether or not competition exists among the plurality of sponsors is checked by a business category of the sponsor in said checking; and

an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors is permitted in said performing a trading process, in a case where competition among the plurality of sponsors is detected in said checking.

32. (Original) The advertising opportunity trading method according to claim 23, further comprising transmitting advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to an advertisement distribution controller which performs distribution of advertisement data for mirroring purpose, wherein:

the advertisement data is transmitted to said advertisement distribution controller in said transmitting advertisement data before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started in said performing a trading process; and

the advertisement data is stored in said advertisement distribution controller and is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity by said advertisement distribution controller, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

33. (Original) The advertisement opportunity trading method according to claim 25, further comprising transmitting advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to an advertisement distribution controller for performing distribution of advertisement data for mirroring purpose, wherein:

the advertisement data is transmitted to said advertisement distribution controller in said transmitting advertisement data before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started in said performing a trading process; and

the advertisement data is stored in said advertisement distribution controller and is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity by said advertisement distribution controller, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

34. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable recording medium which stores a program for controlling a computer to function as:

advertisement data receiving means for receiving advertisement data from a sponsor who wants the advertisement data to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity;

advertisement data registering means for registering the advertisement data received by said advertisement data receiving means;

advertisement opportunity receiving means for receiving an advertisement opportunity offered by media;

advertisement opportunity registering means for registering the advertisement opportunity received by said advertisement opportunity receiving means;

advertisement opportunity publicizing means for publicizing information on the advertisement opportunity registered by said advertisement opportunity registering means via said communication network;

distribution accepting means for receiving information from the media representing that distribution of the advertisement data is appropriate/inappropriate when the sponsor selects the advertisement opportunity publicized by said advertisement opportunity publicizing means for distributing the advertisement data registered by said advertisement data registering means, and accepting an application for distribution of the advertisement data registered by said advertisement data registering means from the sponsor only after it is determined that the information from the media represents that distribution is appropriate based solely on the detailed content of the advertisement data per se; and

a trade processing means for performing a process for trading the advertisement opportunity based on the application accepted by said distribution accepting means.

35. (Original) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 34, storing a program for controlling a computer to further function as advertisement data checking means for checking whether or not a genre of the advertisement data distribution of which on the advertisement opportunity the sponsor applies for corresponds to a prohibited genre which designates a genre which will not be distributed on the advertisement opportunity, and notifying a result of checking to the media.

36. (Original) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 34, storing a program for controlling a computer to further function as competition checking means for checking whether a plurality of sponsors compete in a same business category or not in a case where applications for distribution of advertisement data from the plurality of sponsors are accepted by said distribution accepting means for one advertisement opportunity, and permitting an application for distribution of advertisement data on the advertisement opportunity from only one sponsor for each business category among the plurality of sponsors in a case where competition exists among the plurality of sponsors.

37. (Original) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 34, storing a program for controlling a computer to further function as:

advertisement data mirroring means for transmitting advertisement data which is determined as appropriate for distribution by the media to advertisement distribution controlling means for performing distribution of advertisement data before a trade for an advertisement opportunity is started by said trade processing means; and

advertisement distribution controlling means for storing the transmitted advertisement data and performing distribution of the stored advertisement data which is to be distributed on an advertisement opportunity, in a case where a contract for the advertisement opportunity is settled.

38. (Currently Amended) An advertisement trading and distribution control apparatus which provides information and an advertisement data to a terminal of an audience, said apparatus comprising:

a trade process unit for performing a trading of an advertisement opportunity offered by a media in connection with advertisement data from a sponsor, said advertisement data to be distributed on the advertisement opportunity to the terminal of the audience;

distributing means for distributing the advertisement data to said terminal of an audience from a market control server which intermediates between the sponsor of the advertisement data and the media which distributes the advertisement data to facilitate the trade for the advertisement opportunity, said distributing means including a distribution acceptance unit for accepting an application for distribution of the advertisement data from the sponsor only after it is determined that the media approves the receipt of the advertisement data on the terminal of the audience based solely on the detailed content of the advertisement data per se; and

storing means for receiving advertisement data to be provided to the terminal of the audience from said market control server, and storing the received advertisement data,

wherein said distributing means starts distributing the advertisement data stored in said storing means to said terminal of an audience from a time set for the advertisement opportunity.

39. (Currently Amended) An advertisement trading and distribution control method for providing information and an advertisement data to a terminal of an audience, said method comprising: performing trading on a trade process unit for performing a trading of an advertisement opportunity offered by a media in connection with advertisement data from a sponsor, said advertisement data to be distributed on the advertisement opportunity to the terminal of the audience;

distributing the advertisement data to said terminal of an audience from a market control server which intermediates between the sponsor of the advertisement data and the media which distribute the advertisement data to facilitate a trade for the advertisement opportunity, said distributing including a accepting an application for distribution of the advertisement data from the sponsor only after it is determined that the media approves the receipt of the advertisement data on the terminal of the audience based solely on the detailed content of the advertisement data per se; and

receiving advertisement data to be provided to an audience from said market control server, and storing the received advertisement data,

wherein distribution of the advertisement data is started from a time set for the advertisement opportunity.

40. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable recording medium which stores a program for controlling a computer to function as:

a trade process unit for performing a trading of an advertisement opportunity offered by a media in connection with advertisement data from a sponsor, said advertisement data to be distributed on the advertisement opportunity to a terminal of an audience;

distributing means for distributing the advertisement data to the terminal of the audience from a market control server which intermediates between the sponsor of the advertisement data and the media which distributes the advertisement data to facilitate a trade for the advertisement opportunity, said distributing means including a distribution acceptance

unit for accepting an application for distribution of the advertisement data from the sponsor only after it is determined that the media approves the receipt of the advertisement data on the terminal of the audience based solely on the detail content of the advertisement data per se;

storing means for storing the advertisement data; and

distribution starting means for starting distribution of the advertisement data stored in said storing means to said terminal of the audience from a time set for the advertisement opportunity.